

GESTINGTHORPE ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING 2012

Held in the Village Hall on Thursday 19th April 2012 at 7.30 p.m.

- Chairman:** James Nott
Present: Parish Cllrs, A Cooper, M Cullen, S. Bolter, T Flower, N M Prior
District Cllr Hylton Johnson
County Cllr David Finch
Mr Leslie Crumpton-Taylor – School Governor
Jayne Laken – Village Agent
Sylvie Delaroche – Neighbourhood Watch
Mr Cannell - member of the public
Parish Clerk
- Apologies for absence:** Parish Cllr Richard Payne
District Cllrs Joanne Beavis, Wendy Scattergood

1. **Oates Centenary Celebration - Terry Flower**
Terry reported that the Oates centenary events had started with a champagne reception at Gestingthorpe Hall, which had raised over £1,000 for their chosen charity. All other donations from events will be split between the village hall and the church. The commemorative service was well attended with donations raising over £500.00. Ticket sales from the talk by Michael Smith had raised around £188. The total amount raised so far was £1,421, of which £65 came from the sale of cards. The next event is the flower festival being held over the Jubilee weekend to coincide with the Queens Jubilee. It will include organ music, a full peel of the bells, the church tower will be open and cream teas will be served in the village hall. There will be a concert in the church in July, a cricket match in August and an Oates exhibition on 8/9th September in the village hall by the Gestingthorpe History Society. The Scott Polar Research Team has offered photos for the exhibition. In October there will be tree planting taking place along Delvyns track. Also in October an inauguration of the Oates Memorial Volunteer Group who will donate hours or equipment from which the village will be able to apply to. It is planned this Group will continue thereafter. It was felt that the Oates events have brought a sense of community to the village. The matter of funding for Oates events will be raised under Any Other Business. Terry was thanked for his report.
2. **Minutes**
Minute 6 of the 2011 Annual Village Meeting, under village hall, was amended to change the name of Garden to Martin, the minutes were then agreed and signed.
3. **Chairman's Report**
The Chairman read through the various items on his report.
4. **Accounts for year 2011-12**
The Parish Clerk gave a brief report and answered questions on The Parish Council's annual accounts.
5. **Report from Governor of Bulmer St. Andrew's School**
Leslie Crumpton-Taylor said that he was aware of the constraints on the County Councils budget but spoke about the cuts in funding, the late information from ECC regarding money they would receive for the coming year, the problems in funding special educational needs children and that funding is being given to the more urban area schools. Funding to Bulmer School will therefore be reduced. Due to time limits for spending of capital funds, a new pedestrian route is being constructed this year, which will help with safety for staff and pupils. The last of the asbestos has been removed during the past year. Leslie was thanked for his report.

6. Reports from village organisations & village agent

Village Agent

Jayne Laken reported on her work and that she had helped with 14 cases within Gestingthorpe. She is able to carry out home fire safety checks. She gave details of the food bank in Braintree and can help with anyone needing to apply for this. She has run a computer course in Hedingham School. Jayne asked everyone to let her know of anyone in need of her help. She was thanked for her report.

Sylvie Delaroche joined the meeting.

Educational Foundation

Ashley Cooper reported that the Charity had the same Trustees as last year. The Foundation field had been inspected and was in good order. Income for the year was £1,298, the majority of which was from rent, with £250 from investments. £7,000 – £8,000 is invested in equity and £2,500 in a deposit account. £1,177 had been spent on driving lessons, educational trips, sports, music etc. Total expenses were £1,237. The accounts were passed round. Ashley thanked Wilfred Teverson for auditing the accounts and Jane Winmill for her work as secretary.

Village Hall

Terry Flower reported that James Donoghue continued as chairman. He reminded that the village hall had the only public toilet in the village and that although there were many events going on the hall he felt the hall was under used. He is hoping that the village fete will take place again next year.

Neighbourhood Watch

Sylvie Delaroche had attended the Halstead & Hedingham Crime Prevention Panel meetings and asked whether there were any youth issues in the village. It was felt that there were no major issues. There is a youth club held every 2 weeks, play equipment and the playing field were available for young people. More activities are available in Halstead or Sudbury. The bus service is useful for children to get into Sudbury. Sylvie said that the phone box is now working; it is due to be painted during the summer. Leaflets on Farm Watch were available to take. Sylvie was thanked for her report.

7. District & County Councillors Reports

District Cllr Hylton Johnson

Cllr Johnson said that there was a lot of enthusiasm from the parish councillors with fantastic Oates celebration plans. He said that the local villages are safe communities and there were no major problems. The village agents are very important. He reminded that there were funding opportunities available to apply for. He will be going round the village this year talking to residents. He was thanked for his report.

County Cllr David Finch

Cllr Finch reported on the coming changes in November whereby the Police Authority will be removed and an election held for a Police Commissioner. He advised that there was a Captain Oates plaque in ECC's chamber and he will obtain a copy for us for the exhibition. He advised of the Big Society Fund which was available from John Jowers and he will support any applications we make. Education funding to schools has increased and academies are directly funded by Government, not through ECC. There is a formula basis laid down by Government, not ECC. He will let us have a briefing paper if we felt it would be helpful. ECC are continuing with 0% tax increase this year and next year and are able to do so by looking at efficiencies and smarter ways of working. He reported on ECC's apprenticeship schemes with businesses, matched funding with Broadband Uk, improvements to the broadband speed, highways maintenance are now using one contractor to give better value for money.

The Chairman invited questions.

Questions to David Finch:

Is it ECC that are reducing small school grants by 70% - Cllr Finch said he did not know the answer.

Is it due to ECC that Bulmer couldn't set a budget until 1 day before the start of the financial year – Cllr Finch said no, the Ministry didn't release information to ECC until the last minute.

Is it ECC reducing money in rural schools for special educational needs (SEN) – Cllr Finch thought it was the Government.

Leslie Crumpton-Taylor said ECC had reallocated SEN funds. Cllr Finch said that ECC were responsible for reallocating funds, based on formulas.

Questions to Hylton Johnson:

The Government want to provide incentive to go back to weekly bin collections.

Cllr Johnson said this has been discussed but there is no answer yet.

Is there an emergency arrangement, as the recent bin collection has been waiting nearly 3 weeks in Gestingthorpe.

Cllr Johnson replied that residents can contact BDC; there is provision for problems.

Hugh Cannell replied that BDC had been asked but no action was taken. Cllr Johnson said he would look into this.

Terry Flower questioned the need for a weekly collection and felt there is too much unnecessary rubbish.

Cllr Finch said that landful tax is a cost to community.

Steve Bolter said that at present 2 lorries come round for recycling and this needs to be made more efficient.

8. Any Other Business

Terry Flower asked about the possibility of the Parish Council giving funds for Oates Centenary events. This will be discussed at the next PC meeting.

Steve Bolter said that the Village Design Statement had been produced and a lot feedback from the village to the PC had been received for BDC future plans for the village. He thought that Localism is working in Braintree.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Signed Chairman

Date